

Commission OKs Tests, Research

THE STATE Game Commission has given the Pennsylvania Power and Light Company permission to make test borings and other research for determining the feasibility of constructing a pumped storage hydroelectric project on a section of Game Lands 211 in the Stony Creek section of Dauphin County.

The parcel of land involved in the proposed project amounts to 2,300 acres of the total 31,370 acres which make up the Game Lands.

Details of PP&L's testing program and an outline of the overall project were given to representatives of area sportsmen's clubs last night by Game Commission and electric company personnel.

If tests, which start full scale next spring, indicate the site practicable for the hydroelectric project, PP&L purposes to exchange for the land needed for this project for privately owned lands of greater extent and value which would be fully satisfactory to the Game Commission.

IN ANNOUNCING that the Commission had approved test research, Glenn L. Bowers, executive director of the conservation agency, stressed that the Commission was in no way obligated to giving final approval of the entire project.

Hydro electric pumped storage is a relatively new concept to this area.

The preliminary Stony Creek plan calls for PP&L to construct two reservoirs, one of 940 acres on Stony Creek itself created by damming the stream and a second of 660 acres in a hole between Stony and Sharp Mountains at an elevation 975 feet above the lower reservoir.

The project, estimated to cost some \$100 million, would be capable of producing 1.1 million kilowatts of peak power.

Power would be produced by first pumping water from the lower reservoir to the upper holding area. In times of peak power demands the water in the upper reservoir would be allowed to drain down to the lower reservoir and used for power generation.

IN ADDITION to the proposed exchange of land, approximately 700 acres of the site would be reopened to hunting and other activities by PP&L following construction.

Because of the tremendous fluctuation in the water levels of the two reservoirs, these

areas would have to be closed to public use.

The track of land in question is some 10 miles up Stony Creek from the Susquehanna River and in the Rattling Run area.

The abandon roadbed of the old Susquehanna and Schuylkill Railroad cuts through the area east to west.

PP&L has also discussed an alternate site with the Game Commission. The alternate site is farther up stream and would have its upper pond entirely on Stony Mountain.

Should research and tests prove the site practicable for the project, construction work would start sometime in 1973 and require some three years to complete.

In addition to the exchange of lands, Bowers said the power company would pay forest damage and 10 per-cent of the exploratory costs. Should the project go through to completion the Game Commission would be paid continuing use fees.